

forwarding the protection signals as far as the respective network element terminating the first and second parts of the ring network;

feeding the protection signals into the respective other terminating network element of the first and second parts of the ring network; and

5 forwarding the protection signals counter to a transmission direction of the working signals to the central network element.

12. A method for distributing data within a ring network as claimed in claim 11, the method further comprising the steps of:

10 selecting, in the terminating network elements, the protection signals forwarded at the further network elements; and

feeding the protection signals into the respective other terminating network element of the first and second parts of the ring.

#### REMARKS

15 The present amendment makes editorial changes and corrects typographical errors in the specification in order to conform the specification to the requirements of the United States Patent practice. No new matter is added thereby. Original claims 1-6 have been canceled in favor of new claims 7-12. Claims 7-12 have been presented solely because the revisions by bracketing and underlining which would  
20 have been necessary in claims 1-6 in order to present those claims in accordance with preferred United States Patent practice would have been too extensive, and thus would have been too burdensome. The amendment is intended for clarification purposes only and not for substantial reasons related to patentability pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §§101, 102, 103 or 112. Indeed, the cancellation of claims 1-6 does not  
25 constitute an intent on the part of the Applicant to surrender any of the subject matter of claims 1-6.

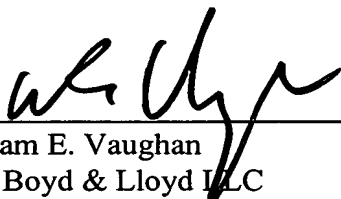
A6  
canceled.

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Early consideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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